

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1 to 86 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and amend Claims 138, 142, 146, 150 and 152 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, now read as follows:

1. to 137. (Canceled)

138. (Currently amended) An output control apparatus operable to communicate with an information processing apparatus via a network, comprising:

print counting update means for counting updating a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed;

trouble counting update means for counting updating a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles when a print trouble occurs;

determination means for determining whether or not the print count value counted updated by said print counting update means reaches a predetermined value;

transmission control means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted updated by said print counting update means reaches the predetermined value, controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value to the information processing apparatus such that the information processing apparatus recognizes the trouble count value indicating the number of troubles counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus; and

initialization means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted updated by said print counting update means reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control means and said initialization means ~~are~~ repeatedly perform performed transmission control and initialization, respectively, whenever said determination means determines that the print count value counted updated by said print counting update means reaches the predetermined value.

139. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to claim 138, wherein the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

140. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said transmission control means controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to said output control apparatus at the same time.

141. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said output control apparatus is a digital copier.

142. (Currently amended) A method by which an output control apparatus is made operable to communicate with an information processing apparatus via a network, comprising the steps of:

a print counting update step, of counting updating a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed;

a trouble counting update step, of counting updating a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles when a print trouble occurs;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches a predetermined value;

if in the determination step it is determined that the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value, controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value to the information processing apparatus such that the information processing apparatus recognizes the trouble count value indicating the number of troubles counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus; and

an initialization step of, if in said determination step it is determined that the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted updated in said print counting update means reaches the predetermined value.

143. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 142, wherein said initialization step initializes the print count value and the trouble count value if the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

144. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 142, wherein said transmission control step controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to the output control apparatus at the same time.

145. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 142, wherein the output control apparatus is a digital copier.

146. (Currently amended) A memory medium, storing computer-executable code for causing execution of a method by which an output control apparatus is made operable to communicate with an information processing apparatus via a network, said method comprising the steps of:

a print counting update step, of counting updating a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed;

a trouble counting update step, of counting updating a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles when a print trouble occurs;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches a predetermined value; if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value, controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value to the information processing apparatus such that the information processing apparatus recognizes the trouble count

value indicating the number of troubles counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus; and

an initialization step of, if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever said determination step determines that the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value.

147. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to claim 146, wherein said initialization step initializes the print count value and the trouble count value if the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

148. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein said transmission control step controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to the output control apparatus at the same time.

149. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein the output control apparatus is a digital copier.

150. (Currently amended) An output control system comprising at least one information processing apparatus and a plurality of output control apparatuses each operable to communicate with said at least one information processing apparatus,

wherein each of said plurality of output control apparatuses comprises:

print counting update means for counting updating a print count

value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed;

trouble counting update means for counting updating a trouble count

value indicating a number of print troubles when a print trouble occurs;

transmission control means for, if said determination means

determines that the print count value counted updated by said print update means reaches

the predetermined value, controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble

count value counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value to

a predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus such that the

predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus recognizes the

trouble count value indicating the number of troubles counted updated until the print count

value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus; and

initialization means for, if said determination means determines that the

print count value counted updated by said print counting update means reaches the

predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein each of said at least one information processing apparatus

comprises:

reception means for receiving the trouble data from said
transmission means, and

display control means for making a comparison between the trouble
data of said plurality of output control apparatuses received by said reception means, and
for controlling a display device to display a result of the comparison, and

wherein said transmission control means and said initialization means are repeatedly performed whenever said determination means determines that the print count value counted updated by said print counting update means reaches the predetermined value.

151. (Previously presented) A system according to Claim 150, wherein each of said at least one information processing apparatus further comprises selection means for selecting one of said plurality of output control apparatuses to be used in response to the comparison made by said display control means.

152. (Currently amended) An output control method, for use in a system comprising at least one information processing apparatus and a plurality of output control apparatuses each operable to communicate with said at least one information processing apparatus, comprising the steps of:

at [[at]] least one of said plurality of output control apparatuses:

a print counting update step of counting updating a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed;

a trouble counting update step of counting updating a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles when a print trouble occurs;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches a predetermined value;

a transmission control step, in which, if it is determined in said

determination step that the print count value counted updated in said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value, controlling transmission of trouble data is transmitted, including the trouble count value counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value to a predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus such that the predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus recognizes the trouble count value indicating the number of troubles counted updated until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus;

an initialization step of, if said determination step determines that the print count value counted updated by said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever said determination step determines that the print count value counted updated by said print counting update step reaches the predetermined value; and

at the information processing apparatus:

a reception step of receiving the trouble data transmitted in said transmission step; and

a display control step of making a comparison between the trouble data of the plurality of output control apparatuses received in said reception step, and controlling a display device to display a result of the comparison.

153. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 152, further comprising the step of, at said information processing apparatus, selecting one of the plurality of output control apparatuses to be used in response to the comparison made in said display control step.